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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0188
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TALLINN 000617

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SUBJECT: ESTONIA: AMBASSADOR MEETS BELARUS PRO-DEMOCRACY
DISSIDENTS

REF: A) STATE 108924 B) STATE 88465

¶1. (SBU/NF) Summary. On August 28, the Ambassador met with Belarusian pro-democracy activists living in exile in Estonia. Two of the activists represent "Third Way," a pan-European, pro-democracy group which produces pro-democracy materials for use in Belarus. The Ambassador committed to disseminate the contact details of Third Way activists to U.S. embassies in countries where they operate. This cable responds to action requests in Reftels A and B. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU/NF) The Ambassador met with three Belarusian dissidents -- Aleksandr Kozhura, Pavel Marouzau, and Andrei Abozau -- on August 28 to support pro-democracy activists residing in Estonia. Kozhura is a former Belarusian university student who had to leave the country because of his public support for demonstrations against President Alexander Lukashenko during Belarus' 2006 elections. Marouzau and Abozau are active members of a Belarusian pro-reform and pro-democracy internet community called "Third Way." Marouzau and Abozau left Belarus in 2006 to avoid arrest by Belarusian police after publication of their satirical animation programs about Lukashenko.

¶3. (SBU/NF) All three Belarusians thanked the Ambassador for meeting with them and giving them the opportunity to describe the political and economic deterioration of Belarus under Lukashenko. All three also expressed their gratitude to the Government of Estonia (GOE) for allowing them to stay in Estonia while their asylum cases are being heard. Kozhura said he is one of ten Belarusians given a full scholarship to study at Tartu University, Estonia's premier institute of higher education, after they were forced to leave Belarus for their political activities.

¶4. (SBU/NF) Marouzau told the Ambassador that he and Abozau have continued their pro-democracy activities in Third Way from Estonia. Abozau explained that Third Way creates and distributes anti-Lukashenko animated film strips, pro-democracy posters, and literature via the internet and smuggles DVDs into Belarus. Third Way provides Belarusian pro-democracy activists, exiles and those still in the country, an online forum to share information and coordinate their efforts. According to Abozau, Estonia's advanced IT environment has made it easier for him and Marouzau to continue their work remotely. Third Way has received support from the U.S. Embassy in Minsk, the Government of Germany, the

European Union, and the Soros Foundation.

15. (SBU/NF) The Ambassador thanked the Belarusians for their commitment to promoting democracy in their homeland, even at great personal sacrifice and risk. Although Post did not pledge any financial support, the Ambassador said he would share information about Third Way with U.S. embassies in countries where Third Way members are in exile and/or operate.

16. (SBU/NF) The following is a list of Third Way members in exile in Europe who remain active pro-democracy activists:

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TALLINN 00000617 002 OF 002

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